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FLOOR DEBATE

February 5, 2001 LB 244

introduced by Senator Bromm. (Read title.) Bill was introduced on January 5 of this year, referred to the Transportation Committee, advanced to General File. Mr. President, at this time, the bill was presented on Friday, I believe. I have no amendments pending to the bill at this time, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Bromm, you're recognized to open.

SENATOR BROMM: Thank you, Mr. President. Timing is everything. I don't know if this is a good time for this bill or not (laugh) but...but here it goes. Let me...can I...can I bring us up to speed, Mr. President? We did debate this bill previously on General File and it came close to noon and we adjourned, and I had explained that the committee had advanced the bill which is to adopt the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact. I had pointed out that this has been adopted by three of the Midwestern states so it is now in effect and operational. Questions had been raised by Senators Hilgert and Wehrbein regarding the fact that this was, by Senator Hilgert, this was a compact and...and concerns about being able to get out without incurring some significant obligations and...and we also discussed how this relates to some of the other compacts the state has been involved with that haven't been very pleasant. Then Senator Wehrbein mentioned some strictly, I think, financial concerns and, following that discussion, we contacted the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact point person who had been here to testify to our committee, Laura Kliever from the Council of State Governments, and to get an update on things. For one thing, I had mentioned or represented to the body that the assessment could be \$25,000 per year. That's what...that's what the first assessment was with three states. Laura said that...that this may go down as additional states join; that they have no expectation of significant increases in dues in the next...well, she mentioned ten years. I think it's hard to envision that far. Other states we had mentioned, we were concerned that Iowa would join because if Iowa joins that means we have a greater likelihood of...of getting some benefit out of this compact and, just to update us, Iowa has introduced a resolution. It's first sent to a subcommittee of the house. It was advanced to a full committee hearing, which hearing will be, as a matter of fact, today, the 5th of February, so Iowa is